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DEPARTMENT OF STATE

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Approved 2/3
10/27/61

Memorandum of Conversation

(1544) 162.00/10-2261
DATE: October 22, 1961
The Secretary's Office
11:30 a.m.

SUBJECT: Berlin

Downgraded To: SECRET CONFIDENTIAL

EO 11652: XGDS (1) 2 (2) 4

Authorized By: H. D. Brewster

August 4, 1975

PARTICIPANTS: U.S. - The Secretary

Mr. Kohler
Ambassador Thompson
Mr. Hillenbrand

fdh

COPIES TO: S/S Secy

EA: DOD/ISA

C: RMA

B/D: Ambassador London AUTH DATE

D/ACDA:

S/0: SOV

S/B: US Mission Berlin

EUR: GCR

GER: Ambassador London

UK: Ambassador Moscow

FR: Ambassador Paris

AMBASSADOR(S)

MARSHAL(S)

GENERAL(S)

COLONEL(S)

MAJOR(S)

MASS COMMANDER(S)

IN PART

NOT AVAILABLE

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Germany - Ambassador Greve

Dr. Schimpfencutter

DEPARTMENT OF STATE A/CDC/MR

REVIEWED BY [Signature] DATE 1/19/62

The Secretary began by handing Ambassador Greve a DPA press ticker from Hamburg purporting to report that the Ambassador would be telling the U.S. Government regarding the German position on Berlin. After reading the ticker, Ambassador Greve remarked, somewhat ruefully, that as usual with this sort of thing it contained some truth and some untruth.

Ambassador Greve said he had left Bonn on Friday afternoon and returned to Washington after a brief visit to Berlin. He had not yet received his basic instructions, which were not in final shape at the time he left Bonn. Moreover, the situation in the capital was still very fluid. Press reports indicated that the FDP committee had met yesterday and had finally agreed to accept Adenauer as Chancellor. However, the opposition to Von Brentano as Foreign Minister continued heavy and his fate was still undecided. Therefore, an important factor in the picture was still uncertain, and a definitive position from Bonn could not really be expected until after at least the nucleus of the Cabinet had been agreed. He hoped the Bundestag would vote on the Chancellor Wednesday and that the Government could begin to take decisions shortly thereafter.

Ambassador Greve said he did have a letter for the President from Chancellor Adenauer which he was instructed to deliver to the President in person. (He showed copies of the letter to the Secretary and the others present.)

As to general procedural questions, Ambassador Greve went on, the Chancellor agreed that the talks with the Soviets initiated by the Secretary and Gromyko should continue in Moscow, but a common Western line would be highly desirable

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for this next phase. This could be discussed either in the Ambassadorial Group in Washington or at a meeting of senior officials here to which Dr. Carstens would come. However, Carstens shared the feeling which Sir Evelyn Shuckburgh had had during their recent conversation in Bonn that neither he nor Carstens should come to Washington unless Laloy of the French Foreign Office were likewise authorized to come. In the latter event, Carstens would be glad to come to Washington, but in view of the problem of government formation in Bonn, this should probably not be before the end of the present week. Such a meeting of senior officials might be useful in preparing for the talks between the Chancellor and the President, if the Chancellor's suggestions in this connection were accepted. The Germans had no specific ideas at this time as to a Western meeting of Foreign Ministers.

In response to the Secretary's query, Ambassador Grew said he had no clear picture at this point of the thinking in Paris, since Shuckburgh had visited Paris after his discussions in Bonn. Grew said he had the impression that Laloy had been prepared to go to London, but the negative orders had come from the top.

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The Secretary said it seemed that we should try to get as much quadripartite agreement in the days ahead before there were any further bilateral talks. These could not be as helpful as they might otherwise be without such quadripartite agreement, which was needed as soon as possible. He wondered if the representatives of all four countries could not come into quadripartite talks with a full set of views. In response to Ambassador Crewe's question as to whether it was thought that Ambassador Thompson should begin his talks with the Soviets next week, the Secretary indicated that this could not be answered precisely. The timing would obviously be affected by the situations in Paris and Bonn. However, he thought it would be a mistake for Ambassador Thompson to be silent too long. This did not mean he would have to discuss the full range of subjects, but might continue exploratory probing.

Ambassador

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The Secretary asked who, if Von Brentano did not remain as Foreign Minister, might be chosen for the position. Ambassador Greve said that the present Minister of the Interior, Schroeder, was a possibility. In that event, the Ministry of the Interior would go to the FDP. FDP leaders had also mentioned Kissinger, former Chairman of the Bundestag Committee on Foreign Affairs and now a Land Minister-President, as a possibility.

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Ambassador Greve said he did not think, in response to the Secretary's query, that there was any feeling in Bonn that the U.S., by action or inaction, was interfering in the present discussions on the formation of a government. He also said he did not think the question of relations with the U.S. was playing any role in the process.

Referring to the Gruson article in the October 19 issue of the New York Times, the Secretary asked whether the Ambassador knew of any alleged private statements by American officials which might have been the cause of German concern as stated in the article. Ambassador Greve indicated he had not seen the article, but he was not aware of any specific statements that might have served as its basis. The Secretary said that we would be interested in his further comments on the subject after he had read the article.

In response to Ambassador Thompson's query as to the reaction in Germany to the Soviet threat to explode a 50-megaton bomb, Ambassador Greve said there had not been much beyond press coverage of reported reactions in other countries, such as Sweden and Norway.

Returning to the Gruson article, Ambassador Greve reiterated that he did not have any idea what he might have had in mind. The Secretary observed that, during the Paris Ministerial meetings in August, Gruson had written an article reporting an alleged stern lecture which the Secretary had given the Germans on the Oder-Neisse line question. When he was told that there was not a grain of truth in this, Gruson responded that, if such a lecture had not been delivered, it should have been and so he wrote the story.

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